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7 March 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: US Policy Toward Cuba

1. We estimate that the US cannot overthrow Castro except by direct invasion, or by acts such as a blockade which are acts of war.
2. We assume that the American people do not want to go to war over Cuba unless there is some further drastic provocation.
3. It is within the limitations imposed by these circumstances that the present policy toward Cuba has been evolved. This policy involves: (a) no assistance to Castro; (b) continued trade embargo and other efforts to isolate Cuba; (c) continued surveillance; (d) continued efforts in the rest of LA to arouse all to the subversive threat from Cuba; (e) watching the Soviets and Castro work out their own unpleasant relations; (f) continued Presidential contacts with Khrushchev, urging him to further withdrawals of Soviet arms and personnel and emphasizing to him the state of US public opinion.
4. In sum, there is little new that the US can do unless the situation changes in some important way.
5. But the basic policy described above would be altered and new opportunities for action would occur in the event that any of several contingencies were to come about.
  - (a) failure of Soviets to remove troops.
  - (b) a renewed Soviet build-up of offensive weapons  
(NOTE: both these involve direct dealing with the Soviets by the US)
  - (c) armed attack by Castro on another state
  - (d) a break between Castro and the Soviets
  - (e) overthrow of Castro by Communists of another hue
  - (f) overthrow of Castro by non-Communists, almost certainly with civil war in Cuba.

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6. We believe it likely that one or more of the contingent developments noted above will come about within the next few months, providing new opportunities for US initiatives. Most interesting are the prospects for political and economic difficulties within Cuba and for further irritations in Castro's relations with the Soviets. Such developments could provide new and favorable opportunities for assistance to resistance forces in Cuba. It also seems likely that if Castro pursues his bent for revolutionary activism he will engage in acts of provocation which will create new opportunities for US counteraction.

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